

and successful housing program is in effect being cut annually as a result of inflation. Since 1986, inflation has eroded the Housing Credit's purchasing power by nearly 50 percent, as measured by the Consumer Price Index. This cap is strangling state capacity to meet pressing low income housing needs.

Last year, I sponsored legislation with Representative LEWIS (D-GA) proposing this same increase in the Housing Credit cap and indexing it for inflation. Representatives ENSIGN (R-NV) and RANGEL (D-NY) also sponsored legislation to accomplish the same increase. Nearly 70 percent of the Ways and Means Committee and a total of 299 of our fellow House Members cosponsored one or both of these bills last year. Unfortunately, the Congress did not pass a Housing Credit increase because the Omnibus Appropriation bill eventually enacted was not large enough to accommodate it.

The Housing Credit is the primary federal-state tool for producing affordable rental housing all across the country. Since it was established, state agencies have allocated over \$3 billion in Housing Credits to help finance nearly one million homes for low income families, including 70,000 apartments in 1997. In my own state of Connecticut, the Credit is responsible for helping finance over 7,000 apartments for low income families, including 650 apartments in 1997.

Despite the success of the Housing Credit in meeting affordable rental housing needs, the apartments it helps finance can barely keep pace with the nearly 100,000 low cost apartments which were demolished, abandoned, or converted to market rate use each year. Demand for Housing Credits currently outstrips supply by more than three to one nationwide. Increasing the cap as I propose would allow states to finance approximately 27,000 more critically-needed low income apartments each year using the Housing Credit, helping to meet this growing need.

A broad, bipartisan consensus exists for raising the Housing Credit cap, just as in 1993, when Congress made the Credit permanent. The Administration, the nation's governors and mayors, and virtually all major housing groups also support this increase.

I urge my colleagues to join me in a bipartisan effort to provide this long overdue increase in the Housing Credit cap.

REGARDING HOUSE RESOLUTION 612

HON. EVA M. CLAYTON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the 24,000 men and women of the United States Armed Forces who are currently involved in operations in the Persian Gulf Region.

It is important that we protect the interests of the United States. It is important that we have peace in the Middle East. It is important that we do what we can to prevent the development of weapons of mass destruction.

However, Mr. Speaker, we must pursue these goals with great caution. We must exer-

cise restraint in our use of force. We must use great care when putting our young men and women in harms way. We must be circumspect before putting the lives of other citizens at risk. We must be prudent in our decisions to intervene in the internal affairs of foreign nations. We may not like Saddam Hussein, but that does not give us the right to declare his death.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the advisors to the President were very deliberate and judicious before arriving at the recommendation to undertake military action against Iraq. However, I am not certain that the assumptions upon which they relied are correct. I am not certain that Saddam Hussein poses the threat to our national security interests that many believe he does. I am not certain that Iraq has the capacity to deliver the kind of mass destruction that should cause us the kind of concern that has triggered this reaction. I am not certain that peace is best achieved through war.

Nonetheless, I stand behind our men and women whose courage and patriotism cannot be questioned. I stand behind our President who, it is clear, painstakingly reached this difficult decision. I stand behind this Nation, at a time which calls upon us to cooperate with each other and be united in our resolve to promote and protect democracy.

TREATMENT OF CHILDREN'S DEFORMITIES ACT

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Treatment of Children's Deformities Act, legislation that prohibits insurers from discriminating against children born with deformities by denying coverage of reconstructive surgery. Children should not only be provided reconstructive surgery to improve the function of a part of the body, but also should be given the opportunity to face the world with a normal appearance. Insurers would like for you to think that such surgery is merely cosmetic—parents of children dealing with the physical and psychological effects of such deformities would beg to differ.

Today, approximately seven percent of American children are born with pediatric deformities and congenital defects such as birth marks, cleft lip, cleft palate, absent external ears and other facial deformities. A recent survey of the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons indicated that over half of the plastic surgeons surveyed have had a pediatric patient who in the last two years has been denied, or experienced significant difficulty in obtaining, insurance coverage for their surgical procedures.

Some insurance companies claim that reconstructive procedures that do not improve function are not medically necessary and are, therefore, cosmetic. America's physicians recognize an important difference between reconstructive and cosmetic surgery to which this bill calls attention. The American Medical Association defines cosmetic surgery as being performed to reshape normal structures of the

body in order to improve the patient's appearance and self-esteem. They define reconstructive surgery as being performed on abnormal structures of the body caused by congenital defects, developmental abnormalities, trauma, infection, tumors or disease.

The Treatment of Children's Deformities Act acknowledges the importance of the AMA's definitions and requires that managed care and insurance companies do the same. The problems that Americans across the board are experiencing with various managed care companies who place cost over quality care are infuriating enough, but when it affects the physical and emotional well-being of children, Congress must be willing to put our foot down.

Please join me in defending the needs of children with deformities and congenital defects and their families by cosponsoring this important bill.

TRIBUTE TO LEOPOLDO "CONDO" GONZALES

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a husband and father, a veteran and war hero, and a member of the San Diego community who died on November 7, 1998, at the age of 75.

Leopoldo "Condo" Gonzales was born to Sophia and Francisco Gonzales on October 7, 1923. In 1941, he met Connie Briones, and they were married on July 14, 1943.

Condo joined the Army in 1942 to serve his country in World War II. He served with the 63d Engineer Battalion in Europe until the end of the war, and received the Campaign Medal, three Bronze Stars, and two Victory Medals.

Condo and Connie began their family with the birth of their first child, Robert, in 1946. Joining Robert was his brother, Frank, in 1948 and sister, Margie, in 1952.

After the war years, Condo worked for the Cannery and Cudahy Meat Packing Company. He was a member of Masonry Union Local No. 89 and worked for several construction companies before his retirement.

Condo and his family lived in the Linda Vista area of San Diego for many years before moving to their farm in Lakeside, CA. Condo enjoyed gardening, and his farm was full of watermelons, corn, and animals. In 1956, they moved back to San Diego, to the Sierra Mesa area. In his retirement years, Condo enjoyed especially his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

His was a wonderful life. He was a man who did his duty to his country, who raised his family well, and who contributed to his community. He is survived by Connie, his wife of 55 years, as well as his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife and family and to the larger community that was touched by his presence.